Irrigation Canals in the Uinta Basin,
U.S. Whiterocks Canal
Duchesne Vicinity
Duchesne County
Utah

HAER No. UT-30-A

HAER
UTAH
7-DUCH.V,
1A-

PHOTOGRAPHS

WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

Historic American Engineering Record
Rocky Mountain Regional Office
National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior
P.O. Box 25287
Denver, Colorado 80225

HISTORIC AMERICAN ENGINEERING RECORD

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Location:	Sections 19, 30, 32 T. 2 N., R. 1E.; Sections 5, 8, 17 & 20 T. 1 N.1 R. 1 E. Whiterocks, Uintah County, Utah Quad: Whiterocks
Date of Construction:	1907-1908
Present Owner:	Ute Indian Tribe Tribal Headquarters Fort Duchesne, Utah
Original Use:	Irrigation Canals
Present Use:	Irrigation Canals
Significance:	The canal provides irrigation for the Indian ranching and farming community of Whiterocks, Utah. The site of Whiterocks was selected by Captain Pardon Dodds who served as Indian Agent from 1867-1872, and Colonel Franklin H. Head, then Superintendent of Indian Affairs for Utah. Whiterocks is not only the oldest settlement in Uintah County, but the oldest settlement in Eastern Utah as well. The relative efficiency of farm organization practices followed by Indians on this canal is the best in the basin.
Inventoried by:	James Jurale, David Stalheim, Craig Fuller National Park Service July 1983

DESCRIPTION AND BACKGROUND HISTORY

The headworks of the U.S. Whiterocks Canal are located in the southeast corner of Sec. 19 T. 2 N., R. 1 E. at an elevation of 6,900 feet. The U.S. Indian Irrigation Service applied for 68.8 cfs to be diverted from the Whiterocks River at this point on June 15, 1905. The application #357 was filed by Indian Agent H. J. Brees. Actual work on the canal began in the spring of 1907 and was completed in the summer of 1908. The dimensions of the canal are as follows: length is 40,415 feet, top width of 16 feet, bottom width of 6 feet, and an effective depth of 2.5 feet. The canal winds through Uintah and Ouray Indian grazing lands which are interspersed with juniper, cotton, sagebrush and primrose, When the canal was constructed, waste from the digging was deposited on its west flank forming a 6-foot burm between it and the Whiterocks River. Approximately two miles southeast of Whiterocks, the canal['s water is conveyed over the Ouray Valley Canal by meaNs of a wooden flume reinforced with steel supports. The flume is built on concrete pillars and measures 10' x 12'. Eleven 4"x6"x10' timbers truss the structure and the floor is built of 2"x6"x8' wooden planks. The farm lands which border the canal receive a high amount of annual precipitation for the Uintah Basin. The annual average precipitation at the Elkhorn-Ashley Station about 2 miles west of the canal's origin is 13.41" per year,. The relative abundance of moisture, coupled with the existence of grass cover of good nutritional value makes this among the most productive of all Indian reservation lands.

REFERENCES

State Engineer Office File #43-3011 #357.

BIA Irrigation Office, Fort Duchesne, Misc. File "Certificate of Appropriation of Water" App #357 Certificate #1300 and "Proof of Completion of Works" Application #357 by H. J. Brees, Indian Agent.

U. S. Department of the Interior, Office of Indian Affairs, Irrigation Division. A Study of Economic Conditions on The Uintah Irrigation Project, Utah. September 1938.